

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FIFTIETH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
39th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 12 December 1995
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 39th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VILCHEZ ASHER (Nicaragua)
later: Mr. AMARI (Tunisia)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

AGENDA ITEM 164: NORMALIZATION OF THE SITUATION CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICA
(continued)

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997
(continued)

Revised estimates for the International Seabed Authority for 1996

Establishment of the Efficiency Board

AGENDA ITEM 138: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE
UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(b) RELOCATION OF UKRAINE TO THE GROUP OF MEMBER STATES SET OUT IN
PARAGRAPH 3 (c) OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 43/232

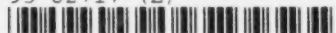
This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/50/SR.39
29 January 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

95-82717 (E)



/...

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. Mr. RIESCO (Director of Conference Services), reporting on the technical and financial implications of the proposal by the representative of the Netherlands that the Committee should rationalize its work by scheduling four two-hour meetings daily, beginning at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., said that, while the Secretariat would be ready to provide conference services to accommodate whatever schedule would be most productive for the Committee's work, the proposal raised a number of issues relating to the efficient use of resources.
2. First, the proposed new schedule provided for only eight hours of meetings daily compared with the 12 hours currently available. Second, interpretation teams operated on the basis of three-hour assignments, which was consistent with the normal length of meetings of United Nations bodies. Since the daily total of eight hours was not a multiple of three, one hour of interpretation service would remain unutilized. It might therefore be preferable in that case to extend the last meeting of the day by one hour. Third, the fact that the Committee would be meeting on a daily schedule which was different from that of the Security Council and other bodies of the General Assembly would make it more difficult to reassign conference resources in the event of the cancellation of meetings and that would result in cost inefficiencies. While it was true that the current system of 12 hours of meetings daily required overtime payments for the servicing of evening and night meetings, the expenditure thus incurred would remain within the budgetary limits authorized for the period in question because of the restrictions which had been imposed earlier in the session.
3. Mr. AMARI (Tunisia) said that the Fifth Committee could not be compared to other Main Committees of the General Assembly. It was out of a sense of responsibility that the Committee had requested night meetings to enable it to complete its work on time and after having made full use of the time which had been available to it.
4. Mr. GOUMENNY (Ukraine) sought clarification as to why agenda item 138 (b) on the relocation of Ukraine to the group of Member States set out in paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 43/232 had been removed from the tentative programme of work for the current week.
5. Mr. ACAKPO-SATCHIVI (Secretary of the Committee) said that the item just referred to by the representative of Ukraine had been deferred to the informal consultations scheduled for the following week because of the absolute priority which had to be given to consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.
6. Mr. GOUMENNY (Ukraine) said that he could not accept the explanation given by the Secretary of the Committee, since the item on the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations, which had replaced agenda item 138 (b) in the current week's tentative programme of work, was a procedural and not a budgetary matter.

/...

7. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretariat would respond to the concerns raised by the representative of Ukraine at a later stage.

8. Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand) asked when the Secretary-General's reports on the financing of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and other peace-keeping operations and of the International Tribunals would be made available to the Committee.

9. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that a number of items still remained on the Committee's agenda. The mandates of several peace-keeping operations were due to expire on either 31 December 1995 or 31 January 1996. In the light of the dramatic changes in the situation in the former Yugoslavia, the Secretary-General had been requested to submit to the General Assembly by 14 December 1995 recommendations for a course of action to ensure that the operations in the former Yugoslavia were not interrupted. He hoped that the report would soon be completed; it would provide a basis for action by the General Assembly covering the first few months of 1996 and give the Secretariat enough time to prepare a more detailed cost estimate.

10. The spending authority for the financing of the United Nations Missions in Liberia, Rwanda and Angola were due to expire on 31 December 1995. In the light of the recent decision by the Security Council with regard to the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia, the cost estimates for that Mission needed to be revised. The Secretariat had scheduled a meeting on that subject with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for 14 December, after which it would report to the Fifth Committee.

11. The mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda had been extended by four days to enable the Security Council to reach a decision on the Mission's future. In the event of a downward revision of the cost estimates, the Secretariat would provide the necessary information to the Advisory Committee to enable it to make recommendations to the Fifth Committee.

12. The Secretariat had already submitted the cost estimates for the United Nations Angola Verification Mission to the Advisory Committee. It had also introduced its report on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), commitment authority for which was due to expire on 31 January 1996. As soon as the Advisory Committee had completed its consideration of the various estimates submitted to it, the Fifth Committee would be requested to take action.

13. With regard to the cost estimates for the International Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the submissions from the Registries of the respective Tribunals were extremely voluminous and difficult to analyse. Nevertheless, the Secretariat hoped to finalize the revised estimates and statements of programme budget implications over the following few days to permit the Committee to grant a bridging authority, subject to review by the Advisory Committee early in 1996.

14. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that he wished to confirm the points just made by the Controller. The Advisory Committee's draft opinion on the revised cost estimates for the financing of the United Nations Angola Verification M:

had already been completed and would shortly be made available. The Advisory Committee had already submitted its recommendations regarding the financing of UNIFIL for the period until 30 June 1996.

15. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) noted that the issue of staff representation, which had been deferred from session to session, had not been included under the item on human resources management in the tentative programme of work for the current week. She would welcome information on when the Secretary-General would make available his proposals on what constituted reasonable hours for the release of staff to attend meetings at which issues of staff representation were discussed. That information was essential to permit the Committee to take action on the matter.

16. Mr. ACAKPO-SATCHIVI (Secretary of the Committee) said that the issue of staff representation had been on the Committee's agenda for the previous two years but that no solution had been found to date. It was for the Committee to take a decision and to proceed accordingly.

17. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) said that it would be rather difficult for the Committee to take a decision on a matter which was not included in its agenda. The reason for the failure to take action was the unavailability of the information requested from the Secretary-General.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would resume its consideration of the matter at a later stage.

19. Mr. GOKHALE (India) noted that the Secretariat's proposals for the reform of the internal justice system had been included under the item on human resources management in the tentative programme of work for the current week. Given the Committee's heavy workload, he wished to propose that the item on the reform of the internal justice system should not be introduced at the current late stage of the session since it was important for the Committee to have enough time to consider the matter carefully before taking a decision. Instead, it should be introduced when the fiftieth session resumed.

AGENDA ITEM 164: NORMALIZATION OF THE SITUATION CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICA
(continued)

20. Mr. PIKE (South Africa) said that South Africa agreed to waive any credits it would receive in the amount of \$549,606 and \$737,142 from budgetary surpluses retained in the regular budget and the peace-keeping special accounts, respectively, for the period 30 September 1974 to 23 June 1994.

21. Mr. MADDENS (Rapporteur) said that during informal consultations, agreement had been reached on the Chairman's draft reply to the letter dated 4 December 1995 from the President of the General Assembly requesting the Committee's technical observations on the implementation of draft resolution A/50/L.44 entitled "Normalization of the situation concerning South Africa".

22. The draft reply contained a number of proposed amendments to draft resolution A/50/L.44. First, the General Assembly would accept South Africa's request not to pay its contributions for the period between 30 September 1974

and 23 June 1994 and would decide that the consequent burden for the Organization should be borne by Member States pursuant to Article 17 of the Charter and the provisions of the resolution. Second, the General Assembly would welcome the statement of South Africa to waive any credits it would receive from budgetary surpluses retained for the aforementioned period. Finally, the General Assembly would decide to reduce the net amount available as credits to Member States and to waive the share of the credits among other Member States on the basis of their respective scales of assessment in order to account for the reduction in outstanding contributions.

23. In accepting that proposal, a number of delegations had sought information on the exact amount of the credit which they would waive. The Secretariat would shortly make available a breakdown of the various amounts in question in the form of an official document.

24. Ms. PENA (Mexico) said that her delegation would not object to the sending of the letter on the understanding that the Secretariat would issue an official document containing the breakdown of the amounts waived by each Member State. While her delegation joined in the consensus on the Committee's technical observations, it was awaiting instructions from its Government on the position it should adopt on the Committee's proposed action as a whole.

25. Mr. MONAYAIR (Kuwait) said that his delegation was satisfied with the Committee's technical observations and did not believe that its action would constitute a precedent for the future.

26. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to endorse the contents of the draft letter to be addressed to the President of the General Assembly.

27. It was so decided.

28. Mr. MUNOZ (Spain), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union, said that the Committee had reached a technically satisfactory solution. The States members of the European Union intended to become sponsors of the amended draft resolution once the proposals contained in the letter to the President of the General Assembly had been incorporated therein.

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997
(continued)

Revised estimates for the International Seabed Authority for 1996
(A/50/7/Add.6, A/C.5/50/28)

29. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates for the International Seabed Authority for 1996 (A/C.5/50/28), said that the General Assembly, in resolution 48/263, had decided to fund the administrative expenses of the International Seabed Authority until the end of the year following the year during which the Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea entered into force. Since the Agreement had not yet entered into force, the administrative expenses of the Authority in 1996 were still to be met through

/...

the budget of the United Nations. On the basis of the assumptions about the work programme with regard to conference servicing of the Assembly of the Authority, set out in table I of the report (A/C.5/50/28), the full cost of conference servicing in 1996 was estimated at \$1,318,900. Those costs would be met from the resources to be appropriated under section 26E of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. The programme budget for 1994-1995 included an appropriation of \$776,000 for the initial administrative expenses of the Authority in 1995. In the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, the 1994-1995 appropriation had been retained in the resource base for 1996-1997, pending submission of the budget of the Authority to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. The budget of the Authority for administrative expenses amounted to \$1,337,900. Consequently, an additional appropriation of \$561,900 would be required under section 33.

30. Mr. Amari (Tunisia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

31. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the seventh report of the Advisory Committee on the revised estimates for the International Seabed Authority for 1996 (A/50/7/Add.6), drew attention to the fact that, as long as the budget of the Authority was to be financed by the regular budget of the United Nations, the approval of the funding must be in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations. According to the Secretary-General, the total budget of the Authority in 1996 amounted to \$2,656,800, including \$1,337,900 for the secretariat; to cover that amount, he was requesting an additional appropriation of \$561,900. The Advisory Committee, however, considered that the number of local staff posts proposed was too high; it therefore recommended instead an additional appropriation under section 33 of the proposed programme budget for 1996-1997 of only \$532,200. He reminded the Committee that the amounts involved applied only to 1996. If funding by the United Nations continued into 1997, the fifty-first session of the General Assembly would have to reconsider the matter.

32. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) noted that, since the Authority would merely be continuing the work currently done by the Preparatory Commission for the International Seabed Authority, there was no need for a higher allocation. Any increase in its budget should be reflected in an increase in its functions. A Council and a Secretary-General were supposed to have been appointed, but since that had not taken place all its work had been blocked. The situation was therefore identical to that at the beginning of 1995 and the budget for 1996 should also be identical.

33. His delegation supported the recommendation by the Advisory Committee that the Assembly of the Authority should hold four-week rather than five-week sessions. He urged that the Authority's secretariat should not be allowed to grow automatically and that any duplication of its work with that of the United Nations Secretariat should be eliminated. An analysis of the financial aspects of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/50/28) indicated that many cost estimates were too high. He agreed with the Advisory Committee that the number of local staff should be limited to 14 after 31 May 1996. He also questioned the need for temporary assistance staff or consultants and for the proposed expenditure on equipment. The report of the Secretary-General contained no

/...

realistic prognosis of the future scope of the Authority; the 1996 budget should be no higher than that for 1995.

34. Mrs. ARAGON (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said she hoped that resolution 48/263, in which the General Assembly had decided to fund the administrative expenses of the Authority until the end of the year following the year during which the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea entered into force, would be implemented. She also requested clarification as to why the estimates did not cover 1997. The 23 posts requested by the Secretary-General, including 17 local posts, were a minimum requirement and she regretted that the Advisory Committee wished to reduce that number by three. The proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/50/28) should be adopted.

35. Mr. ATIYANTO (Indonesia) shared the view expressed by the representative of the Philippines, which reflected the long-held position of his delegation. He pointed out that paragraph 4 of document A/C.5/50/28 should have stated that the administrative expenses of the Authority in 1996 were to be met through the regular budget of the United Nations.

36. Mrs. SEALY MONTEITH (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), noted that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee fell short of the Secretary-General's proposals, which provided for 23 posts for the period after May 1996. That was essentially a skeleton staff, representing the basic minimum with which an organization such as the International Seabed Authority could carry out its initial but vital functions. In the interests of economy, no additional Professional-level posts had been requested and it was anticipated that General Service staff would carry out semi-technical functions. Yet the Advisory Committee recommended that the number of posts should be reduced by three. That was a matter of concern to her delegation, since those posts were important when viewed against the background of the very meagre provisions for Professional posts. She urged that the three posts should be included in the budget.

37. Mr. GRANT (United States of America) said that his country supported the International Seabed Authority, but, where a tight budgetary situation existed, greater restraint was needed. States parties to the Convention on the Law of the Sea should have paid for the preparatory costs. The Preparatory Commission on the Chemical Weapons Convention had kept a strict control of its budget and the Authority should do the same. Its allocation should therefore be \$776,000, as originally proposed. That might involve a less ambitious programme of work in administrative services, but savings could be found and any additional funding could be drawn from existing resources. A large staff was unnecessary, since it was clear that several years would be needed to complete the preparatory phase. Financial and staff regulations, for example, were not important until the Authority came into existence. He therefore opposed any increase in the budget. The revised estimates needed to be included as part of the ongoing informal discussions on the regular budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

/...

38. Mr. TOYA (Japan) said that, according to his understanding, it had already been decided that the Assmmbly should hold four-week rather than five-week sessions. There was therefore no need for further discussions on the matter under section 26E.

39. Ms. RODRIGUEZ ABASCAL (Cuba) said that, in his report (A/C.5/50/29) the Secretary-General had put forward balanced proposals which were based on the practical and budgetary needs of the Authority. The criterion to be applied should not be to keep the budget down, but to take account of the Authority's requirements.

40. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) pointed out that it was the General Assembly itself, at its forty-eighth session, which had decided that the expenses of the Authority should be included in the regular budget. Moreover, it was not the Secretary-General of the United Nations who was responsible for the annual budget, but the Secretary-General of the Authority. The Secretary-General had been asked to prepare the budget only because, in August 1995, the General Assembly had been unable to agree on the composition of the Council. As for the appropriations, the \$776,000 included in the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 applied to the three months up to 31 December 1995. It was therefore unrealistic to consider the same sum for the whole of 1996. Once a Secretary-General of the Authority had been appointed, there would in any case be a reduction in costs for 1996. Until the Council was in place, the General Assembly was committed to funding the Authority's administrative expenses in accordance with resolution 48/263.

41. The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Abelian (Armenia), Vice-Chairman, would hold informal consultations on the question and would report back to the Committee.

Establishment of the Efficiency Board

42. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) drew attention to paragraph 97 of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/50/1) concerning the establishment of the Efficiency Board. The Board was purely advisory, giving the Secretary-General the means to pursue one of his five stated management objectives, namely better management of the Organization's cost structure and an enhanced programme for promoting efficiency and cost-effectiveness (A/50/1, para. 17 (e)). The Secretary-General planned to simplify existing procedures, redefine work programmes, improve productivity and, where possible, substitute lower-cost alternatives. He also aimed to eliminate duplication and overlap in programme delivery and to identify programmes, even mandated programmes, that were of questionable value to Member States. The Board would recommend programmes where it would be possible to attain enhanced efficiency without affecting the delivery of mandated programmes.

43. In reply to specific questions, he said that members of the Board served as individuals and that their names were listed in the Secretary-General's bulletin on the subject (ST/SGB/281). Member States would be informed of any change in the Board's composition. The Secretary-General would provide periodic reports on the Board's work, including information on recommendations with possible

/...

programme implications where implementation depended on the agreement of Member States.

44. The costs involved would be minimal; travel expenses would be paid when members could not combine meetings of the Board with other duties. Those who were not United Nations staff members would also receive a small honorarium, which would be covered from within existing resources. The Board's programme had yet to be finalized. However, its priorities were, *inter alia*, to find ways of simplifying personnel and financial procedures, to look into outsourcing options in printing and documentation, to consider conference facilities and staffing in administrative areas after the implementation of the Integrated Management Information System, to follow up the cost reductions emanating from the fiftieth session, to review the management of travel, and to identify potential overlaps in the economic and social fields and in peace-keeping. As the project began to come into focus, the Secretariat would encourage Member States to offer assistance, particularly by providing experts in specific fields.

45. Mrs. ARAGON (Philippines) asked whether the statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management could be circulated as a Committee document. She would like to know whether the costs which would be incurred by the Efficiency Board were included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 and, if so, under what section, and what would be the relationship of the Efficiency Board with intergovernmental bodies such as the Fifth Committee with regard to its recommendations.

46. Mr. ODAGA-JALOMAYO (Uganda) said that his delegation maintained its reservations, expressed previously in other forums, regarding the establishment of the Efficiency Board. The Secretary-General had enough resources within his Office to carry out the activities outlined by the Under-Secretary-General. If a board had to be created each time the Secretary-General planned to review activities, the proliferation of boards in itself would affect efficiency. The Under-Secretary-General had mentioned that the Efficiency Board would review even mandated programmes; that would be an infringement of the prerogatives of the intergovernmental bodies that had specific mandates to review programmes and activities.

47. Although the Under-Secretary-General had said that the costs of the Efficiency Board would be minimal, there was no reference to such costs in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. In any event, the Board should be financed with extrabudgetary resources. The Secretary-General's bulletin announcing the establishment of the Board (ST/SGB/281) did not refer to a review of the Secretariat itself; if the Secretary-General was satisfied that the Secretariat was functioning efficiently, then no review should be necessary. There was also a danger of duplication with the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Board of Auditors, the Joint Inspection Unit and other bodies.

48. The Secretary-General's bulletin also referred to a working group, headed by an Executive Director, reporting and directly accountable to the Chairman of the Efficiency Board (ST/SGB/281, para. 5). He would like to know how the

/...

working group's duties would differ from those of the Board, since the working group would be accountable only to the Chairman.

49. His delegation would not approve any expenditure for the Efficiency Board against the regular budget. It would like to be assured that any review measures the Secretary-General intended to undertake would be approved by the General Assembly before they were implemented, especially when they might have an adverse impact on the activities of the Organization.

50. Notwithstanding the foregoing, he said that the United Nations could not afford to continue to talk about itself; it was time to implement mandated programmes and activities.

51. Mr. GOKHALE (India) said that his delegation would like to see a breakdown of the expenditures envisaged for the Efficiency Board, and to know whether they had implications for the regular budget; whether there would be expenditures additional to travel costs and honoraria; how the salary of the Executive Director would be covered; who would be the appointee; what procedures would be followed in making the appointment; whether it was correct to assume that the person appointed would have staff functions in the Secretariat. The Secretary-General's bulletin stated that the membership of the working group would include selected staff members of the Department of Administration and Management. His delegation would therefore like to have details of the man-hour expenditures involved, as well as the costs, including the costs of publications and conference services.

52. He noted that, although the Efficiency Board was to be an internal advisory board, expert services were being sought from Member States. He recalled that similar expert services had been sought with regard to procurement reforms in the Secretariat, a policy his Government had consistently opposed. His delegation questioned the propriety of looking into mandated programmes and activities with a view to achieving efficiency, and then seeking expert services on a voluntary basis from certain Member States. In that sense, it was not an internal board. He would like clarification as to which Member States had been approached and which had indicated their willingness to provide expert services.

53. He would also like to know how the fact-finding studies mentioned in paragraph 4 (b) of the Secretary-General's bulletin would be financed. There was already sufficient expertise within the Secretariat to carry out such duties. There also seemed to be an overlap between the mandates of the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Efficiency Board; he would like clarification on that matter.

54. Mr. JU Kuilin (China) said that his delegation still had reservations about the establishment of the Efficiency Board. It was up to the General Assembly to determine, after serious discussions by Member States, which programmes were useful and which were not. It was difficult to determine how to evaluate the performance of programmes. The composition of the Efficiency Board was also an important issue. The experts would come from different countries, and it might be that only a small number of countries, all from a certain group, would actually be represented; their impartiality might therefore be open to questions. In addition, it was important to clarify the relationship between

the Efficiency Board and the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Administrative Committee on Coordination, the Committee for Programme and Coordination and other intergovernmental bodies.

55. Mr. MARCONDES DE CARVALHO (Brazil) said that, while his delegation recognized that the Secretary-General had the prerogative to undertake a review of the efficiency of the Organization, it did not see that any provision had been made in the proposed programme budget for the funding of the Efficiency Board. He would like to know what the time-frame for the Board would be. It appeared to him that it was going to be a continuing activity within the Secretariat; if so, that should be clearly reflected in the programme budget. With regard to the appointment of an Executive Director, he would like to know where that post was provided for in the programme budget, what selection procedure would be followed in making the appointment, and what the status of the hiring of the Executive Director was. He noted, moreover, that the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General had placed considerable emphasis on substantive programmes, but very little emphasis on common support services. It would appear that the Board's reviews would be geared mostly towards mandated activities, despite the fact that mandates were defined by Member States. His delegation had been told in informal consultations that the Committee would be provided with information on the source of the funding for the Board, but such information had not yet been provided.

56. Ms. RODRIGUEZ ABASCAL (Cuba) said that her delegation shared most of the concerns expressed by previous speakers. The statement by the Under-Secretary-General seemed more like the programme of work of a private corporation than that of an international organization. It was important not to lose sight of the fact that the United Nations was an international organization. The Efficiency Board should not review mandated programmes; that was the prerogative of the Member States. Although her delegation had been told previously that the Efficiency Board would not have budgetary implications, it now appeared that there would be travel costs, yet the proposed programme budget contained no indication of the expenses that would be incurred by the Board. Her Government was also concerned about the duplication of functions with the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Joint Inspection Unit, the Committee for Programme and Coordination and other bodies. Such a proliferation of structures could run counter to the intention of improving efficiency. Her delegation would also like information regarding the selection procedure to be followed in hiring the Executive Director, as well as the specific expenses involved.

57. Mr. HANSON (Canada) said that his Government supported the establishment of the Efficiency Board and had offered its assistance in the matter. The Secretary-General had acted within his authority and his delegation did not agree with any suggestion - if in fact such a suggestion had been made - that the authority of Member States had somehow been infringed upon.

58. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) said that his delegation shared the concerns expressed by other speakers. The comments of representatives of developing countries should be taken into account by the Administration. His delegation had many reservations with respect to the creation of the Board. The Under-Secretary-General had mentioned that the Board would review programmes and activities in which there was overlapping, particularly in the economic and

social areas. The Fifth Committee had not determined that there was duplication in those areas, and he therefore wondered how it had been concluded that there was. The issue was not only one of costs; it also involved the prerogatives of the General Assembly. The Under-Secretary-General had said that assistance would be sought from experts from developing countries, particularly on the matter of procurement activities, but Member States had not been able to participate in a just and equitable way in that work. Only countries which had financial resources had been involved. His delegation would like clarification as to the duration of the Efficiency Board, when it would present its first report, and how its reports would be dealt with.

59. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) stressed that the issue of the establishment of the Efficiency Board was not a North-South question. It was a question of the Secretary-General exercising his prerogative to seek ways to improve the work of the Organization. While her delegation shared some of the concerns expressed by others, it did not believe that the Secretary-General would be infringing on the authority of Member States. The Secretary-General would submit his recommendations to the General Assembly. It was possible to improve efficiency without affecting mandated programmes. She would like to know which post in the budget would cover the appointment of the Executive Director. With regard to the working group, she recalled that she had recently requested information on 31 working groups involving staff representation, which cost a considerable amount of money and on which the Committee had no information. She was surprised that delegations were not curious about all the other working groups.

60. Her Government was not a member of the Efficiency Board, and had not been approached regarding the appointment of the Executive Director or for voluntary funding; that, however, was not important. What was important was that the Secretary-General was seeking help to accomplish what Member States required, namely, a more efficient Organization, a better use of funds and a review of programmes.

61. Mr. KOUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) said that his delegation endorsed the comments made by the representatives of Canada and Portugal. It saw the establishment of the Efficiency Board in the context of the three-phase reform of the structure of the expenditures of the Organization recommended by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization (A/50/1). His delegation welcomed that initiative, as well as the efforts to obtain expert assistance and counsel. The pertinent information had been presented to the Advisory Committee (A/50/7, paras. 45-47). The Secretary-General was entitled to seek assistance in carrying out his functions as the chief administrative officer of the Organization. The Efficiency Board's functions would have no additional financial implications, inasmuch as they would be carried out within existing resources. His delegation was mainly concerned with ensuring that, in future, the Secretary-General should adhere to the existing administrative and budgetary procedures of the Organization and report to the General Assembly on the conclusions of the Efficiency Board.

62. Ms. HOLLAND (United Kingdom) said that her delegation supported the comments made by the representatives of Canada, Portugal and the Russian Federation. It welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General in establishing the Efficiency Board, which would help him to implement the Organization's

mandated activities in the most efficient and effective way possible. It looked forward to receiving the recommendations of the Efficiency Board.

63. Mr. TOYA (Japan) said that, while his delegation supported the purpose of the Efficiency Board, it felt that, in the interests of transparency, Member States should be provided with more information on the potential costs of the Board in such areas as travel and honoraria, the procedures to be used by the Secretariat in soliciting voluntary contributions, and the criteria for the selection of members of the Efficiency Board.

64. Mr. OWADE (Kenya) joined those delegations which had expressed reservations regarding the establishment of the Efficiency Board. His delegation felt that it was important to maintain transparency and to avoid duplication of functions between various United Nations bodies. With regard to the size and composition of the Efficiency Board, his delegation wished to know if the list provided in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's bulletin (ST/SGB/281) was exhaustive or merely indicative. It also felt that some of the functions of the Efficiency Board could be performed by other United Nations bodies.

65. Mr. JU Kuilin (China) said that, if the establishment and composition of the Efficiency Board fell within the exclusive authority of the Secretary-General, his delegation would like clarification as to the scope of the Secretary-General's authority. It was his delegation's understanding that the General Assembly was the highest organ of the United Nations, Member States therefore had the right to raise objections to actions taken by the Secretary-General, and to expect the Secretariat and the Secretary-General to consult with them on an equal basis.

66. Mr. DJACTA (Algeria) said that his delegation remained sceptical as to the viability of the Efficiency Board. It therefore supported the comments made by the representative of the Philippines on behalf of the Group of 77 and by the representatives of Uganda, Brazil, India, China, Cuba, Egypt and Kenya.

67. Mr. STEIN (Germany) said that his delegation joined those of Canada, Portugal, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and Japan in supporting the establishment of the Efficiency Board. It considered the Board to be an internal management tool the establishment of which fell within the authority of the Secretary-General, and it looked forward to receiving timely reports on the results of the Board's work.

68. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) assured the members of the Committee that they would receive full reports on the results of the work of the Efficiency Board, and that the primary focus of the Board would indeed be on the personnel and financial operations of the Secretariat. With regard to potential duplication between the mandates of the Board and those of the Joint Inspection Unit or the Office of Internal Oversight Services, he said that the Board would not be in competition with those bodies, but would be able to follow up on the implementation of their recommendations. He estimated that the Board would function for a year or more, with an intense but not perpetual focus on the management process. With regard to the Executive Director of the Board and other staff, he said that he had solicited input from a number of Member States, but that only the United States had responded so far;

letters to other Member States were still in course of preparation. As for the costs involved, he said that the first meeting of the Board had incurred expenses of approximately \$800; he did not anticipate any significant variation in that figure for the eight or nine meetings still to be held. Finally, he said that the Board would provide the members of the Committee with reports on a regular basis, but that it would need three or four months to produce the initial report.

69. Mr. GOKHALE (India) said that his delegation wished to receive a detailed breakdown of the expenditures required for the Efficiency Board as projected for the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997; the breakdown should include information on the number of meetings planned, as well as on projected expenditures for travel, honoraria, publications, the man-hours of Secretariat staff involved, and incidental expenses. As there had been no cash contributions to date, his delegation would have to consider all such Board-related expenditures in the context of the regular budget.

70. He would like to know which delegations had been approached with regard to contributing candidates for the post of Executive Director, especially since he understood that a selection for that post had already been made without his delegation having been approached. In that context, he reminded the Chairman of the doubts expressed by his delegation regarding the way members of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Procurement had been selected; his delegation had never accepted the report on that subject. His delegation was, moreover, still awaiting the report of the Secretary-General on proposals for the improvement of Secretariat procurement activities pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/216 C.

71. Mr. ODAGA-JALOMAYO (Uganda) said that enough machinery was already in place at the United Nations to find ways of increasing efficiency, and he expressed doubt as to the need to add another body for that purpose. Moreover, he joined the representative of India in requesting information as to which delegations had been approached with regard to contributing candidates for the post of Executive Director; it appeared that some delegations had been informed at different times and that others had not been informed at all.

72. Mr. MARCONDES DE CARVALHO (Brazil) repeated his delegation's request for information on the source of the funding for the Efficiency Board. He would also like to know the amount of expenditure involved and in the budget for which biennium such expenditure would be included. The Under-Secretary-General had himself expressed uncertainty regarding the time-frame projected for the Board. Moreover, like that of India, his delegation had not been approached regarding candidates for the post of Executive Director of the Board. It would therefore like to know what criteria had been used to select delegations for the initial approach.

73. Ms. RODRIGUEZ ABASCAL (Cuba) said that her delegation deeply regretted the selectivity shown by the Secretariat in requesting Member States to submit candidates for the post of Executive Director. She joined the representative of Brazil in asking for an explanation of the criteria used to select some Member States but not others, to the apparent detriment of the equality of all Member States.

74. Mr. DJACTA (Algeria), supported by Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt), said that his delegation shared the concern expressed by the representatives of India, Uganda, Brazil and Cuba regarding the apparently selective approach used by the Secretariat in approaching Member States on the matter of the Executive Director.

75. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the process of approaching Member States on the matter of the Executive Director was still ongoing. He had been particularly anxious to focus on the review of personnel procedures, and had therefore first looked to Member States which had recently undergone such an exercise, such as Australia, New Zealand, Germany and Canada; a number of other States were, however, also being approached. He was unable to state with certainty the time-frame anticipated for the Efficiency Board, but assured the members of the Committee that the Board would function only as long as its work was beneficial to Member States.

76. Mr. GOKHALE (India) reiterated his delegation's request for a breakdown of the expenditures of the Efficiency Board in the context of the Committee's consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. With regard to the question of which delegations had been approached on the subject of the Executive Director, he said that efficiency and effectiveness were not the exclusive prerogatives of certain States or regions.

AGENDA ITEM 138: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

- (b) RELOCATION OF UKRAINE TO THE GROUP OF MEMBER STATES SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 3 (c) OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 43/232

Draft decision A/C.5/50/L.9

77. Mr. GOU MENNY (Ukraine), introducing draft decision A/C.5/50/L.9, said that it was over two years since his Government had submitted a request to be relocated to the group of Member States set out in paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 43/232. However, even though most Member States now recognized that the inclusion of Ukraine in the group set out in paragraph (b) of that resolution was an anomaly, the problem had not been resolved. As a result of its difficult economic situation and its excessively high assessment both for the regular budget and especially, for peace-keeping operations, Ukraine had become one of the largest debtors to the Organization. His Government could no longer accept that situation and his delegation was therefore submitting draft decision A/C.5/50/L.9.

78. His delegation was not satisfied with the organization of the consideration of agenda item 138 (b) proposed by the Bureau. For over two months, his delegation had been unable to have the item taken up by the Committee, and now, for inexplicable reasons, the informal consultations scheduled for that evening from 6.30 to 9.30 p.m. under the tentative programme of work, were to be on agenda item 120 instead of agenda item 138 (b). Agenda item 138 (b) was concerned with an acute political problem, and political action would be required for its solution. In that connection, he was authorized to state that, in the event that the Bureau failed to make satisfactory arrangements for the

consideration of agenda item 138 (b), his delegation would be unable to join in the consensus on the draft resolutions under other agenda items, including agenda item 116, the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

79. The CHAIRMAN said that the changes in the programme of work had been made for the sake of efficiency, in consultation with the coordinators of the items concerned.

80. After a discussion in which Mr. MARCONDES DE CARVALHO (Brazil), Mr. KELLY (Ireland), Mr. MENKVELD (Netherlands), Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) and Mr. ODAGA-JALOMAYO (Uganda) took part, the CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to revert to the original programme of work for the evening.

81. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.

